

The Republican.

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TO THE REVEREND ROBERT HINDMARSH,
PRIEST OF THE SECT OF SWEDENBORGIAN,
OFFICIATING AT THE NEW JERUSALEM
TEMPLE, SALFORD, MANCHESTER.

Concluded from page 384.

I pass to your twentieth section.

CARLILE'S DENIAL OF THE MORALITY OF THE BIBLE.

XX. THE last objection, which I shall here notice, is, that "the Bible is not even *moral*." A pretty kind of objection this, to come from the mouth or the pen of an Atheist! of one, who, denying the existence of a God, the Supreme Legislator, from whom issue all the precepts of religion and morality, holds himself exempt from every internal tie and obligation of conscience, that can possibly bind society together! This, however, is the man, who hypocritically sets himself up as the advocate and defender of virtuous feeling! who, having no sense of duty to his neighbour, but what arises from the consideration of human laws, or of his own worldly advantage, either yields an unwilling obedience to their injunctions, or else gives himself up to the indulgence of his criminal lusts and passions! But let us once more hear the charge, which this atheistical writer has to make against the Sacred Scriptures. Notwithstanding the repeated caution and admonitions against vice, and recommendations to a virtuous course of life, which form so striking a feature in every one of the inspired books "I tell you, (says Mr. Carlile,) that the Bible is not even *moral*." And why is this rash sentence of condemnation hazarded, but because in some places the Divine Being is represented as burning with wrath, fury, and indignation against the wicked; in other places, the punishments and calamities, which the disobedient bring upon themselves, are ascribed to the same Power; and again in other places, the murders, cruelties, frauds and depreda-

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tions committed by the Israelites upon their enemies, are *apparently* sanctioned and even commanded by the God, whom they professed to worship? To this charge against the Oracles of divine truth let the following observations serve as a reply.

This section is passing insolent, and proves, at least, that your morality towards an opponent of your dogmas is at a very low ebb: but this is a common feature in professors of religion, and affords me one and a strong argument, *that religion has no moral influence*. If I deny the existence of such a God as you preach, I do not deny the necessary existence of morality; but, on the other hand, its increase forms the main feature in my labour, in writing, speaking, and example. I challenge the world to produce that being to whom I have set a bad or immoral example. On the other hand, every person about me, or who reads what I write, must acknowledge, that I am incessantly reprobating every thing of the kind! Come and ask the Gaoler of this Gaol, a bitter and base man towards me, what he has to say against me out of his four years' observation of my conduct. He will say something about my *shocking and diabolical opinions*, which he cannot explain, because he does not understand; but you can get nothing more from him, if you tell him it is to be a public matter. He will lie, if you promise him secrecy; but he will not offer to prove any one wrong act of mine. To the little work called "The Moral-ist," I point your attention, for a knowledge of my views of morality and moral endeavours. If I did not consider the act wholly and highly moral, that endeavours to uproot all religion, I would not be seen in it. Such men as you teach, that morality has no source but religion; but I can prove, and have proved, *that morality has no source in religion*; but that religion is, in every sense, immoral and pernicious. Your doctrine, that morality is a heavenly influx, will never make a moral people. And why? Because every person who adheres to it must feel, that he must wait for that influx, as he cannot command it. I make morality to be wholly a matter at human command, that there can be no excuse for its absence in any individual; but that every individual can be and should be moral. I shew him the temporal advantages of morality, and that immorality can bring him nothing in return but pain. It is not necessary that I write any distinct treatise upon the subject here, further than as a refutation of your slander; but I can triumphantly refer you to "The Moral-ist" to shew you what the morals of an Atheist mean. Can an Atheist be moral? Yes, he can,

and he alone can be a *pure moralist*. Every ingredient of religion is a draw-back upon a man's morality. His mind free from religion, he has no need to be a hypocrite, no time to waste for idolatrous purposes, one cause less for disagreement with his fellow man, and nothing to pursue, nothing so much at heart as to see a moral people following free and fair discussion, and thus increasing their happiness with their knowledge. I have waded through that quagmire the Bible, and have selected every moral in it. I valued them at sixpence, before I began, and I find, according to the scale of charge for better morals in "The Moralist," they scarcely cost that sum. I have taken every thing out of the Bible that is good; therefore, I have done more good with that book than you or any Jew or Christian that has gone before me.

Upon what ground do you rest your charge of one "who hypocritically sets himself up as the advocate and defender of virtuous feeling"? It is a matter where no man can act hypocritically, unless you can shew how a *hypocritical good* can be done. I put one plain question to you—do my examples support my precepts? That is the question for you to answer, negatively if you can, by a statement of facts. What proof do you offer, that all the precepts of religion and morality issue from God, the supreme legislator? The existence of your God is denied—prove your premises before you draw your inferences. Define your terms. Satisfy yourself that you are not talking nonsense. Do you say there are no moral precepts, but those of the Bible? Go to "The Moralist," read those of Confucius, read those of the Bible, and say which are best.

You state, that "I hold myself exempt from every internal tie and obligation of conscience, that can possibly bind society together." I pronounce this a falsehood, and you a slanderer. Does any one religious sect constitute the society? Is not the largest of the sects a small portion of the society? Are there not a hundred sects in this country? Is there any "internal tie or obligation of conscience" between any two of the sects? Does not the difference of opinion make them malicious one towards the other? God, Jesus, Holy Ghost, all is nothing; each hates the other as an enemy, as an opponent who is ever upbraiding him with error and ignorance. Remove this religion, and you will have mankind as quiet, as moral, and as harmless as a flock of sheep. There is a moral power much more powerful than any human laws that can be fabricated; and, as religion

abates, this moral power increases. You know nothing about this moral power, and yet you tell me, that "having no sense of duty to his neighbour, but what arises from the consideration of human laws, or of his own worldly advantage, either yields an unwilling obedience to their injunctions, or else gives himself up to the indulgence of his criminal lusts and passions!" Sir, in answer to this, I challenge enough of publicity, I feel enough of virtuous indignation, to pronounce the writer of that sentence, *a bad hearted man*, a priest, who felt his weakness before the moral power of his opponent, and resorted to slander from chagrin.

All this abuse is heaped upon me, because, I have said the Bible is not moral. I have not said the Bible does not contain a single moral; for I have copied some hundreds, all that it does contain; but, when we speak of a thing as moral or immoral, we do not say that a particle of the one cannot be combined with the other; but rather enquire what is the aggregate? is it morally useful as a whole? is it calculated to communicate morality without the taint of immorality? Will you answer these questions?

"Notwithstanding the repeated cautions and admonitions against vice, and recommendations to a virtuous course of life, which form so striking a feature in every one of the inspired books, I tell you, says Mr. Carlile, that the Bible is not even moral." Yes, I tell you that the Bible is not even moral. You say every one of the inspired books contains *repeated cautions and admonitions against vice*. This is not true. There is not a caution, nor admonition, against vice in the Book of Genesis, of Numbers, of Joshua, of Judges, of Ruth, of Samuel 1st and 2d, of Kings 1st and 2d, of Chronicles 1st and 2d, of Ezra, of Nehemiah, of Esther, of the Song of Solomon, of Lamentations, of Daniel, of Hosea, of Joel, of Obadiah, of Jonah, of Nahum, of Zephaniah, of Haggia, of Malachi. Out of thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, twenty-five of them have not one single moral inculcation, not one single caution or admonition against vice. This, in the number of books, is very near two to one of immoral to moral; but in those very books, in which a moral inculcation, an exhortation against vice may be found, the amount of immorality far outweighs and buries the moral exhortations. The single book of Proverbs contains more moral exhortations, more cautions and admonitions against vice, than all the other books, both of the Old and New Testament, put together. And it is well known, that these were not inspired or communicated by Jehovah, but that they are a

collection of all that were current at Babylon, when the Jews were there as captives: the exhortations of the Persian and Chaldean Magi, and not moral precepts of Jewish origin.

It is a stinging charge against you Christians, whether of the Swedenborg corps or not, to be told that the Bible is not moral; whilst nothing is more easy than to refute the assertion, if false. Instead of shuffling the question, had your ground been good, you would have exclaimed—“*Shew me the immoralities of the Bible.*” This is the way to settle such a question, and to do this, we have no need of your science of correspondences. I have been imprisoned four years and as many months for publishing, that the Bible contained obscene and immoral tales. For doing this, I have been called a wicked, malicious, evil disposed, profane, scandalous, and blasphemous person, and I certainly have felt disposed to reply to these accusations by engraving on copper all the obscenities and immoralities of the Bible. The Bible has been tortured to produce subjects for illustrative prints and for great historical pictures; but no one has yet ventured to delineate what may be very properly called the **BEAUTIES OF THE BIBLE**. I utterly dislike all such exhibitions, all such catering for bad passions; but I have felt, that mine is no common case, and that, I should be morally excusable, and fully justified, in portraying those parts of the Bible, which my accusers pass over with shame, and punish for all allusion to them: whilst they go on to hold up the book as a whole as one of unblemished purity! The scenes of the book of Genesis would furnish matter for what the voluptuarian would call one hundred delicious prints: whilst the scene at the Hill of the Foreskins, (Joshua chap. 5.) would be a picture surpassing all pictures; to represent Joshua with his sharp knives, Jehovah and the women looking on, and some of the hundred thousands circumcised, some circumcising, and others waiting to be circumcised! That would be a scene for a great historical picture! If Mr. Haydon will undertake the task, and exhibit the picture for sixpence, he will have no need to paint another, towards making a fortune. Others of a much more indelicate cast may be made, but, I forbear to delineate farther, under the pledge, that I will not get those prints engraved, if I am subject to no further prosecutions; but, as sure as I am, and have the means to pay a competent engraver, I will make a fortune, by dedicating a whole series of such prints to the

Vice Society! It would be a just retaliation on my part at this moment: but I forbear.

You have fancied, or pretended to suppose, that we pronounce the Bible *immoral*, because of the bad passions attributed to Jehovah; but this is only the minor part of the imputation; the major part consists of absolute obscenities, murders, tortures, and the vilest frauds. You have wholly passed by the obscenities. Can you say whether Emanuel Swedenborg has explained the delicacy of those matters by his science of correspondences? I introduce your twenty-first section, which is a continuation of this subject; but I premise, that it is rather to give you fair play, than for any thing I have to say in reply. I will observe here, that you have not made the least apology for the obscenities, and the viciousness of character in which both Jehovah and his worshippers are depicted. It is evident, that you felt the difficulty of the subject, and that you have wholly failed in falsifying my assertion, that THE BIBLE IS NOT MORAL. Your more favourite part, the New Testament alone, is not moral.

THE MORALITY OF THE BIBLE DEMONSTRATED, OR GENUINE TRUTH CONTRASTED WITH APPARENT TRUTH, AND IN ALL CASES DETERMINING THE REAL CHARACTER OF DIVINE REVELATION.

XXI. BESIDES the science of correspondences already spoken of, according to which the Sacred Scriptures are written throughout, another most important view is to be taken of their literal contents. There are two kinds of truth, *genuine* and *apparent*, both of which are to be found in almost every writing, whether human or divine. The former describes things as they *really are* in themselves, and the latter as they *appear to be*. This may be illustrated by a familiar mode of expression in regard to subjects of natural science. Both in speaking and writing, it is usual to ascribe a daily motion to the sun, which yet properly belongs to the earth. We say, the sun rises in the east, proceeds in its course to the west, and there goes down. Now this is not a *genuine truth*, but an *apparent one*, adapted to the capacity of children, and others, who judge of things according to the perception of the senses: and though such language is used by the learned, as well as by the simple and ignorant, still, if it be not *confirmed* or *insisted upon* by fallacious reasonings, it is by no means subversive of the *genuine truth*, which teaches, that the sun is stationary, and that the appearance of its progressive motion is caused by the revolution of the earth round its own axis. But if the *appearance* be *confirmed* by sen-

sual and sophistical arguments, in such case the *genuine truth* is not only lost sight of, but absolutely destroyed. The relative situations and motions of the other heavenly bodies are frequently described in the same manner, not as they *actually are*, or as viewed from the sun, the center of our system, but as they *appear* in an oblique direction to an inhabitant of the earth.

Again, a parent puts on the *appearance* of anger and severity towards a disobedient child, when *in reality* he feels the most sincere affection for him. A judge also, in pronouncing the sentence of the law, *appears* to the convicted criminal to be hard-hearted and cruel, when at the same time he may entertain sentiments of kindness and pity towards him; for, however it may *appear*, that the punishment proceeds from the judge, or the law, of which he is the administrator, still the *real truth* is, that the delinquent by his own guilty conduct brings the punishment upon himself.

From these comparisons and illustrations, the reason may be clearly seen, why in the Sacred Scriptures it is so frequently stated, that God is angry with the wicked, and will finally cast them into hell; that he authorized or commanded the murders, cruelties, frauds and depredations, which were practised by the ancient Jews; and that he afflicts mankind with the various evils and calamities, which they experience, either as individuals, or as nations. In all these and similar cases it is only *apparently* true, that evil of any description originates with the Divine Being, who in his Word has repeatedly assured us of his *real* character, that he is love itself, mercy itself, and the fountain from which uniformly and for ever proceeds the most essential goodness towards all his creatures; thus that he is to be judged of, not according to *appearances*, but according to *genuine truth*. He has himself in the most solemn manner denounced every species of crime, and disclaimed that character of tyranny and vindictive feeling, which none but the ignorant and the impious of the human race can deliberately ascribe to him. When they upbraid him by asserting, that "the way of the Lord is *not equal*," he expostulates with them, and in the language of tenderness and truth says, "O house of Israel, are not my ways *equal*? are not your ways *unequal*? Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin," Ezek. xviii. 29, 30. And again, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have *no pleasure* in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for *why will ye die*, O house of Israel?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

It has been truly observed, that the divine will and the divine power are one; and since God wills nothing but what is good, it follows, that he can do nothing but what is good also, and this in the way and manner dictated by his own infinite wisdom in the Sacred Scriptures of divine truth. He cannot condemn, cast into hell,

or predestinate the soul of any person to eternal death. He cannot avenge injuries; neither can he be angry, and punish. He cannot even turn away his face from any one, or regard him with the least severity of countenance; these and the like acts being totally contrary to his essence, and consequently contrary to himself. Wheresoever, therefore, expressions of this kind are to be found in the Sacred Scriptures, they are to be interpreted solely in reference to the wickedness of man, who judges of the Lord according to the evil state of his own mind. And as it *appears* to the wicked, when they suffer the punishment due to their crimes, that it is inflicted upon them by the Supreme Being, whom they suppose to be then angry with them, because he does not immediately remove it, therefore, in agreement with such appearance, anger, wrath, and fury are frequently ascribed to him in the Word, when yet, as before observed, nothing can *in reality* be more foreign to the divine nature; since, as the Psalmist says, "Jehovah is good *to all*; and his tender mercies are over *all his works*," Psalm. cxlv. 9.

This finishes the general subject of your pamphlet, and, as you conclude with a serious address to me, I, in imitation, must conclude with a serious address to you. In doing this, I will not offer to mollify any thing I have previously written, I will not have it said, that, I have lied and slandered, and then said to my opponent, "pray do not take it amiss—I meant no harm:" that is, no further harm than the abuse in print can inflict. I will deal more honourably with you.

XXII. HAVING now considered all the objections of infidelity, which were judged necessary to be taken notice of in this limited and imperfect defence of *Christianity against Deism, Materialism, and Atheism*; and having introduced such observations upon each of them, as the different matters in question appeared to require, which it is hoped will not be without their use to the candid and unprejudiced reader; I shall conclude what I have to say on the whole subject with

A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO MR. CARLILE.

SIR,

You have thought proper to invite me to a discussion of some most important subjects connected with divine revelation in general, and the Christian religion in particular; and in compliance with the repeated solicitations of my friends, I have, though with reluctance, again entered upon the field of controversy, which I had so lately quitted. (*) If in the course of my remarks on the principles

(*) Alluding to a work lately published, entitled *A Vindication of the Character and Writings of the Honourable Emanuel Swedenborg*.

adopted by you, and others who think with you, it shall appear, that I have been too personal, or have said any thing unworthy of the character of a fair and honourable opponent, I beg, that you will consider it unintentional on my part. For I can assure you, that I entertain no ill-will towards you or them, and have no desire to wound the feelings of those, who differ from myself in sentiment either on religious or political subjects. But I cannot forbear expressing my best wishes for your eternal welfare; and as a friend, though altogether unknown to you, except by name, I trust you will permit me to give such counsel and advice, as I believe will, if followed, contribute infinitely more to your present comfort and future happiness, than the line of speculation, which you have for some time past been pursuing.

My advice is, That you endeavour to remove all prejudice and and pre-conceived opinions from your mind; that you commence your studies afresh as a child, with a sincere desire to acquire truth purely for the sake of truth; that you examine the motives, intentions, and thoughts of your heart, to see how far they are in agreement or disagreement with the divine laws, that, if wrong, they may be set right; also that you betake yourself in all humility to read the Sacred Scriptures, especially the Four Gospels, on which the Christian religion is founded, first acknowledging your own inability to understand them, without light imparted from heaven; and if you never before directed a prayer to the one true God Jesus Christ, that you confidently venture upon that duty, imploring his assistance while you read, that you may be gradually led to a just perception of the truth. I would further seriously recommend to you the perusal of the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, which are calculated to give a clearer and more satisfactory view of divine revelation, than any of the works of mere human production, with which I am acquainted. The doctrines here recommended, which are to be regarded as those professed by the members of the New Church, and by which, compared with the Sacred Scriptures, they are desirous of being judged of as to their religious sentiments, are contained in the four following small works, originally published by Emanuel Swedenborg, viz.

1. *Of the New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine.*
2. *The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord.*
3. *The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Sacred Scripture.*
4. *The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem, from the Precepts of the Decalogue.*

You have already, no doubt, read many comments, and heard many discourses, on the doctrines of the Christian religion; and it is probably from these, that you have formed the opinion so unfavourable to its spirit and character, which you have so often repeated. But there is too much reason to believe, that the true and

genuine principles of Christianity have been grossly misunderstood and misrepresented; and this because the great body of the professors of that religion, falsely conceiving the divine trinity to consist of *three persons*, instead of *three essentials* in one person, have not addressed their prayers and their worship *immediately* and *directly* to the Saviour himself, but to some other Being for his sake: the consequence of which has been that they could not, under such circumstances, receive light from heaven, but on the contrary have involved themselves in errors, absurdities, and contradictions without end. It is to be feared, that you, my friend, and many others, have formed your ideas of Christianity from the opinions of men, and not from the Divine Records themselves, understood in their true and genuine sense; and therefore it is no wonder that you have hitherto mistaken your object, by contending against Christianity itself, when you ought rather to have been employed in detecting and remedying its abuses.

Let me intreat you, therefore, to listen with attention to the advice here given. You stand among the foremost in the list of those, who would be thought champions in the cause of Infidelity. You have taken an active and prominent part, by writing and publishing your opinions: and no doubt many look up to you, as to their leader and oracle. There lies your difficulty, and your danger too. But let not the vanity of heading a party allure you from the plain path of rectitude and duty. Conquer yourself, and you will then gain the victory over a host. Be zealous, but discreet, in the pursuit of genuine truth; and remember, that until you are actually in possession of it, however perfect may be your attainment of mere worldly science, you are still destitute of the wealth of heaven.

Once more I call upon you to reflect calmly and deliberately on your present state of infidelity, the danger to which you are exposed by rejecting the evidences of Christianity, and the probability, if not certainty, of incurring those penalties, from which you can never reasonably hope to escape, without sincere repentance, and a true faith in the one living God. Examples are not wanting of learned men, and some even of rank and title, who, after a long course of impiety and incredulity, have at length been sensible of the precipice, on which they stood; and who have, before it was too late, renounced their errors, and become converts to that very religion, which they before so loudly and so rashly condemned. Why may you not follow in their steps? Why may not you awake as out of a deep sleep, and devote the remainder of your days to the defence of a religion, which you have heretofore calumniated and despised? You are still, I understand, a young man, and have it in your power to repair the breach you have unfortunately made. Your days, however, are already numbered in the sight of Omniscience; and

whether they be many or few, you have no time to lose. Eternity advances upon you almost with the rapidity of lightning. Death is already armed with his pointed shaft; and perhaps while I am writing, or you are reading, he may receive the unexpected, the fatal commission to strike you to the earth. Where then, Mr. Carlile, will you be found? Your body will be consigned to the dust, a mass of corruption, a repast for worms, or perhaps in various ways become the sport of howling winds: but your spirit, the real man, who lived and acted in the body, will, after surviving the day of probation, stand before the tribunal of heaven, to receive the just and final recompence for all your works, whether they have been good or evil.

I add no more: but wishing you all the happiness, of which your immortal spirit is susceptible, and commending you to the divine mercy and protection,

I remain yours sincerely,

ROBERT HINDMARSH.

Salford, Manchester, Feb. 7, 1824=68.

A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO MR. HINDMARSH.

SIR,

I HAVE replied to, and I conceit, that, I have refuted your pamphlet, which professes to review my letter to you of November last. Your wishes for my eternal welfare are not stronger than mine are towards you; for, had I not desired to remove error, and to increase peace and good fellowship with increasing knowledge, I should not have opened this correspondence.

I can both give and take counsel, with equal complacency; and, in answer to your advice, I have to say: that I have successfully removed from my mind all prejudice and pre-conceived opinions that were not well conceived. I have begun my studies afresh as a child, with a sincere desire to acquire truth purely for the sake of truth: and this is precisely my reason for saying, that I know nothing of divine laws, and know enough of the nature and cause of superstition to know, that you also can know nothing of divine, distinct from human laws, and those which we otherwise term, the laws of nature. It is, because, that I have rooted out those prejudices and wrong associations of ideas, which the priest and the ignorant schoolmaster inflicted upon my infant mind, that I now differ from you. You have retained those prejudices; and, it is because you have never fairly examined them, that you differ from me. I have read again and again, I have compared and analysed those books which you call the Sacred Scriptures and the Four

Gospels, and I declare to you, most honestly, that *I think the upholding them, for any purpose whatever, to be a disgrace to the science and literature, in a word, to the knowledge of this age.* I have examined every part of the foundation of the Christian religion, and I proclaim to you, and to all mankind, that the whole tale about Jesus Christ is a fiction, and that no such a character ever figured at or near Jerusalem. I have before referred you to a document that offers every proof of this, or my letter to Dr England.

If I acknowledge my own inability to understand your Christian or Jewish Books, to whom shall I look for enlightenment? To a priest? Is that what you mean? How am I to know when, or when not, light is imparted to me from heaven, since I know nothing about heaven or heavenly light, nor can I find any one to impart that knowledge to me? How can I direct, *honestly*, a prayer to that object which I prove to be an idol, at least, of which I call in vain for proof of past or present existence, to you, or to any other person? And, as to Swedenborg's books, I have read enough of them, if you cannot refer me to that explanation, which I have solicited, *between natural and spiritual substances.* I ground all my knowledge upon references to, or comparisons with, existing things, and not upon the fictions of any man. I neither believe in one God, nor in three Gods, nor in three in one, nor in one in three, nor in any thing that any man has ever preached or written about the word *God.* I can find no proof of any thing that has been said upon that word, when I refer to those only proofs which any man can have had for himself who has gone before me. I cannot find, that Christianity ever consisted of any thing but the opinions of men; and it is precisely on this ground, that I have formed my *new ideas* of it, and have rejected all those divine records which ignorant or interested men had impressed upon my youthful mind.

I have no vanity in heading a party. Having before said, that my principles indicate nothing more than the disposition to acquire the greatest amount of knowledge; it follows, that so long as any one individual has more knowledge than myself, he, not I, will be the head of the party:—*but most ambitiously do I aspire to become the head of this party.* Not as the head of a sect; but as a man possessing a greater amount of useful knowledge than any other man. I know nothing of, will have no connection with, any party or parties in any other light. Yours is a mere wrangling party, one of a hundred Christian sects; whilst I labour to harmonize

the whole, by communicating such knowledge to them as, of which, they are evidently deficient.

In vain do you preach heaven to me, until you can explain what you mean by it. I, too, had notions about a happy place, called heaven, when I was more ignorant than I am at this moment; but honest examination has convinced me that it was all a delusion. You are now challenged to prove that it was not a delusion.

I am not to be alarmed by any priestly menace, about future pains and penalties—for a change of opinions. I believe nothing of that tale of Eve being punished for plucking and eating from the Tree of Knowledge; and pluck I will, as fast as I can. I know nothing in my past life that requires repentance: if you know more on that head, be so good to acquaint, to remind, me of it.

I challenge you to state any one instance, wherein any one learned man, whether with or without rank or title, who had publicly rejected the doctrines of the Priests from a fair examination of their grounds, having recanted and again returned to a belief and approbation of them. I declare to you, that I know of no such a case, out of the world of fiction. There is a wide difference between the man who rejects, after fair examination, and one who neglects to examine and passes for an infidel, because he is profligate and pays no attention to religious ceremonies. There may be cases where the latter, wearied with debaucheries and profligacies of all kinds, may become a good Christian, by way of change, and as an alleviation of remorse for his past life: but take the man who has fairly examined the grounds of all religion, throughout the course of a strictly moral life, and who has discovered, that all is imposture which the word *religion* embraces; take such a man, and bring him back to Christianity, if you can: shew me such a man, who has ever expressed sorrow for his infidelity towards any opinions: hold up his name and identity if you know such a man: if not, cease to talk of that which I declare to you, as my firm opinion, to be impossible—utterly impossible. I cannot conceive the possibility of my going honestly back to rank as a Christian. I see nothing honourable in the title that can induce me to do it, as a matter of conciliation. I see nothing useful, that can be accomplished by my so doing, on any terms: therefore, I pride myself in my hostility towards it, as that of virtue frowning upon vice, honesty upon dishonesty: and, if I must still suffer further persecution for maintaining such a character—give me persecution; give me

abuse; give me all the pains, all the virulence that can be heaped upon me; rather than hypocritical change, or rather than it shall be said, that ease and comfort have been purchased from his enemies, and the enemies of all that is good and useful to mankind, with disgrace, by—

RICHARD CARLILE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE REPUBLICAN.

SIR,

THE enclosed are the result of an evening's application to the study of the "*Holy Scriptures*." So many thoughts present themselves after attentively reading them, that I have been induced to throw some of them upon paper for the chance of your giving them a place in the Republican; to the prosperous circulation of which I am a sincere well-wisher,

Yours, &c.,

A Partizan of Free Discussion.

Genesis i. The world is said to have been created in the beginning by God. By the world is meant Heaven and Earth.

There was, it appears, no form in the earth, but it is not said that there was no earth.

There was no light either. God commanded that there should be light, and there was light, immediately. (ver. 3.)

Yet the dividing of the light from the darkness, and naming the two, occupied a sixth of the time, in which all that was created was made.

One should have thought, that when light came it, would have distinguished itself from Darkness.

The luminous bodies placed in the Firmament are said to be for the purpose of dividing the day from the night. As the duration of these periods varies with each degree of latitude, no very accurate measurement could be gathered from the alternations of light and darkness; the Lapland night, and the Egyptian, would be very different in length. The people who were the first to possess this account of the creation, appear to have been utterly destitute of any accurate measure of time: though if these heavenly bodies were placed in the firmament as signs, it is natural to suppose that these signs would be intelligible to the people for whose use they were created, and for whose information their object was revealed. Moses, however, did not think proper to explain this. Thus the purpose of "signs" was in no way fulfilled. The Chaldeans were the first to make a tolerably just computation of the solar year, many centuries after the supposed

creation. The solar year could not have been understood in Moses's time, as the incredible accounts of human life reaching to 8 and 9 centuries attest. (ver. 14.)

Of the gross mistake about the moon being created to light by night, it is hardly worth while to say much. As *she has no light* but what is cast upon her by the sun, and as even that light is very rarely present in comparison with the dark nights, *this* purpose too, has obviously been badly answered. (ver. 16.)

After a vast quantity of matter had been prepared, and living creatures were assembled on the earth, on the sixth day God is said to have created man, male and female created he them, chap. i. ver. 27. So the work was completed, and on the seventh day God "rested from all his work," (chap. ii. ver. 3.)

However, a few verses lower we read a fresh account of the making of man; whether this man was the same as the first does not appear, but we read soon after of a second woman being fabricated, out of this second man's rib. (ver. vii.)

This two-fold relation I look upon to be the consequence of an oversight in the collecting of the ancient traditions and stories, concerning the early history of the world. Every old nation has a large assortment of these legends, and each nation has a separate cosmogony. In compiling the Genesis account, it is obvious that more than one tradition has been made use of, and that the same fact is twice stated in consequence. (M. Volney is of opinion that Hilkiab was the author of the collection of writings and tales which form what is called the Pentateuch; for which opinion he certainly gives some plausible reasons.)

The man and woman being placed in the Garden of Eden, are prohibited from eating of the fruit of a certain tree, under pain of death. The serpent, who here talks, tells the woman that she will not suffer this penalty (in which it turns out he did not deceive her) but that it would make her wise. (chap. iii. ver. 4, 5.) The woman, wishing to become wise, eats of the fruit. The only apparent evidence of increased knowledge is, that after eating, both she and the man become ashamed of being naked, after which the Lord God is obliged to make them some clothes. ver. 21. But whether the serpent deceived her in this or not, is it conceivable what could be God's design in preventing her from knowing good from evil, unless it was the same motive which induces our modern despots and aristocrats to object to educating the poor?

The man and woman are both cursed and expelled the Garden of Eden after this disobedience. Among the maledictions, there is one which, in chap. i. ver. 18. is given as a blessing and privilege, viz. that he shall eat of the herb of the field. This I suppose escaped the almighty recollection in the hurry of the occasion.

The principal reason why God expelled Adam, was lest he should next proceed to pluck off the tree of life, and so become

independent of God by eating of that which would enable him to live for ever. Thus it appears that God wished to keep Adam and Eve in ignorance, and so told them they would die if they ate of the tree of knowledge. The serpent told them the real truth and thereby incurred God's displeasure. So after all, it was God who deceived these persons, and not the serpent. (chap. iii. ver. 22.)

The whole of this savours so strongly of the eastern romances and allegories, that it is almost idle to bestow serious attention on the inconsistencies it offers. The youthful mind is, however, taken prisoner so early, that these come to be overlooked; for by the habitual repetition of the same words, we frequently lose sight of the meaning they convey, and thus have the egregious defects of the book of Genesis, in regard to consistency and probability, ceased to awaken our observation; it is therefore not altogether a superfluous task to refresh these powers of observation, by pointing out some of the prominent fallacies, of this part of scripture.

The extraordinary wickedness of the human race it seems excited the anger of God, who found that his angels were continually getting down to the earth amongst the daughters of men. It is not mentioned what sort of bad actions were committed, but merely that the earth was corrupt. Now at this time, only five generations had occurred, since Adam; so that supposing crime to have prevailed, the Lord God could not be said to be "long suffering," when he determined to destroy "all living," beasts and birds included, so soon after their first introduction on the earth. The generations were, Adam—Cain—Enoch—Methusaleh—Lamech—Noah. That these should have got up such a population as to "fill the earth with violence," in so short a period, is a circumstance which deserves notice, inasmuch as it shews the tendency of the human race to multiply rapidly. The narrative of the deluge and its incidents, together with the institution of the rainbow, are perfectly analogous with a number of fictions invented among rude nations in order to account for Phenomena which they cannot understand the causes of.

The priests who set up for sages and hold the people in subjection by means of an assumed superiority of knowledge, never choose to confess that they know not the causes of remarkable occurrences, because that would reduce them to the same level with the people. Every set of Priests, therefore, throughout the priest-afflicted world, are provided with "a full, true, and particular account" of the origin of the principal natural phenomena observable in the economy of the universe. The Genesis account is one of the most imperfect, as well as erroneous of these inventions. It is plain that if the Deity had inspired Moses to describe the cosmogony, he would have prompted him to give such an outline of the creation, and of the objects which the various parts of it were to an-

swer, as would consist with subsequent observations. But the entire ignorance it evinces of the nature and causes of the atmospheric facts, proves, that at the time it was composed nothing was known concerning the natural sciences, and that any tale could impose upon the vulgar, that it suited the sacerdotal worthies to circulate. There came rain from the clouds. Then (said the priests) there must be a reservoir behind the firmament; we must say God put the heavens to divide the waters. There were two shining bodies; we must say they were put there to light the earth. (Of the vivifying *heat* of the Sun no mention is made, although it is the principal use of that body.) Thus every thing existing is still affirmed to have been made for the particular purpose to which man applies it, and we see in the never ending argument of "design," the same convenient mode of accounting for what we do not comprehend, that has been pursued from the earliest times.

Now, that the solar system and the knowledge of meteorology have become better understood, we can discern the relation of antecedent and consequent amongst several facts of the nature of which the early nations were wholly ignorant, and therefore assumed that they were expressly designed to answer a particular purpose. All they knew was that the events were productive of certain useful ends; but these ends might have been secondary and subordinate to certain greater results, for any thing they knew to the contrary. The ascribing peculiar functions to the sun and moon which are not fulfilled by experience, only shews in a most forcible manner that *design* may just as well be inferred from false premises as from true ones, and that it is worthless as an argument.

The inhabitants of the Tonga islands believe the account which their priesthood has constructed of the beginning of the existence of these islands, quite as implicitly, as good Christians swallow the Mosaic one. According to this tradition, it is believed that there was once nothing but a great sea; that a Giant was one day angling, out of the sky, and that he felt something very heavy at the end of his rod; he pulled it up and it proved to be the island of Tonga. This is one of the simplest derivations that have ever been ascribed to the world, and it is at least full as intelligible as those which more enlightened nations continue to propagate.

The universal propensity to refer natural facts, of which the proximate cause is unknown, to supernatural interposition, will never be subdued so long as the pernicious notion of "design" continues in force. Until mankind shall overcome the repugnance to saying, "I do not know," we shall be infested with false, foolish, and misguiding theories. The ignorant are ever ready to credit legends connected with any remarkable physical fact. The position of a large stone, a peculiarly shaped stone, a

deep ravine or fissure, caves, even now serve to hang a supernatural story upon : any thing, with weak minds, is preferable to acknowledging they do not know the cause. Even the black mark along the back of the ass cannot be suffered to remain unexplained.

An ancient notion prevails in England that this streak took its date from the day Jesus rode on one, and that he bestowed the mark on the assine race, in perpetuity, as an honorary token of the service it rendered him ; it being in the form of a cross. That this popular story was invented to suit the fact of the ass's stripe is sufficiently apparent, and it is probable that all the ancient accounts of the origin of atmospheric occurrences and remarkable appearances in the substances of nature, were founded upon equally unsubstantial grounds.

During the whole of the account of the first pair being put forth out of Eden, we find no mention of any penalty extending beyond the natural life of man. He is told that he shall earn his subsistence by labour and sweat—the woman is informed that she shall bring forth in sorrow. This is the sum of the denunciation ! and yet on this is built a most complicated statement of what we have lost by Adam and Eve's sin ; of what we should have had if they had not so misbehaved ; of the urgent necessity of an intercessor, to soften the dreadful severity of the sentence, and to procure, by the painful sacrifice of his own life, a partial restoration to the forfeited privileges of the human race. It is truly lamentable to see how easily we suffer ourselves to be duped on the subject of religious belief. Though we have the book of Genesis open us to examine, wherein nothing is said about future punishment or rewards, we prefer taking the assertion of priests on the subject, who assure us that we were at the time of Adam's sin, consigned to eternal posthumous torments, which nothing short of God's own son's death as an atonement, could possibly avert.

The only two punishments pronounced by God (according to Genesis) continue to operate. Man gets nothing from the earth without labour, and woman's travail is sorrowful enough. But the necessity for labour is no great affliction, and the woman is not compelled to bear children unless she consent. Thus it would seem that all the stuff about the fall of man, the sinfulness which supervened upon it, the horrible penalties, the necessity for atonement, &c. are all the inventions of priestcraft, and have no foundation in the Old Testament.

Even the loss of Eden as an abode, which is said to have been entailed by Adam upon his posterity, is perfectly absurd. How could the whole race of mankind live on one small spot of ground ? They were commanded to multiply, replenish, and subdue the earth, yet we are to believe that they would all have lived in Eden !

Not wishing to trespass at too great length upon your pages,

I shall, for the present, conclude. I may, before long perhaps, send some further remarks, as they occur to me upon a calm examination of the Jewish books.

TO MR. RICHARD CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

RESPECTED FRIEND,

Bolton, March 1, 1824.

ABOUT forty admirers of the principles of Mr. Paine, met together on the evening of the 29th January, at the house of Mr. Cargon, to celebrate the Anniversary of the birth of that "noble of nature," Thomas Paine. A plain but substantial supper was provided for the occasion by our host; and several females, chiefly the wives of the male part of the company, enlivened us with their presence. The evening was spent with the greatest conviviality and good humour, several excellent speeches and recitations were delivered, and the toasts which I subjoin (interspersed with appropriate songs,) were drunk unanimously. You will perceive from our toast, that we have a Zetetic society in this town. We meet on a Sunday evening, and on a Monday we open the room for the public discussion of some of the questions that may be on the books. The Reverend George Harris, our Unitarian minister, has been delivering a course of Lectures on CHURCH of ENGLANDISM; and on Sunday evening last, he announced from the pulpit, that, shortly, he should publish a reply to the Reverend William France, Thomas Allin, Joseph Fox, Abraham Scott (Trinitarian ministers) and Richard Carlile; when the work is out, we may perhaps contrive to send you a copy. We congratulate you on the liberation of your shopmen, and make no doubt, but you might command the services of some of your friends in this town, if the Bridge Street, Vice, and other Gangs are not glutted. Mr. Peel, it seems, in the case of your sister, was determined (Shylock like) to have his bond; however, we do think that a new era is breaking in upon us, and that the day is not far distant when toleration (that's a hateful word) in matters of opinion will be as universal as the vital principle. You will please to accept our best thanks for your exertions in the cause of free discussion; and we assure you, nothing would give us more real pleasure than to see you released from the fangs of your dastardly persecutors and making the tour of England and Scotland. You will also communicate our best respects to Mrs. Carlile, and your sister, not forgetting the brave Mrs. Wright and such of your coadjutors in the glorious undertaking who are now in du-rance vile.

I am, Sir, with the greatest respect,

In the name of our society, your sincere well-wisher,
WILLIAM SMITH.

List of Toasts.

The Immortal memory of Thomas Paine. (In solemn silence.)

The Sovereignty of the People.—

May the Age of Reason, Rights of Man, and Common Sense, become as universally read as the Bible, Prayer-book, and Koran.

The Immortal memory of Helvetius, Voltaire, Mirabaud, Condorcet, Volney, Elihu Palmer, Shelley, and all others, whose writings may have contributed to the advancement of Civil and Religious Liberty.

Mr. Richard Carlile, the undaunted advocate of free discussion; may his publications become as universally read as the works of bigotry and superstition. (Three times three.)

Mrs. Carlile, Mrs. Susannah Wright, Miss Mary Ann Carlile.

The Bolton Zetetic Society, and may its principles tend to the annihilation of ignorance, bigotry and superstition. (Three times three.)

Mr. Humphrey Boyle, and all Mr. Carlile's incarcerated shopmen.

The Immortal memory of Mr. Ricardo. (In solemn silence.)

Messrs. Hume, Burdett, and all the supporters of Miss Carlile's petition.

May all the Royal and Priestly robes in Europe be converted into mops to wipe out the boroughmongers' debt.

May every Church be converted into a Temple of Science, and the parsons into ploughboys.

Prosperity to the Republicans of Columbia, and may their noble example be speedily followed by every enslaved country in the world.

The Immortal memory of Riego. (In solemn silence.)

May Christians imitate the example of St. Thomas, called Didymus.

Messrs. Hunts, Cobbett, Drakard and Wooler, and the real independent part of the Press.

The Ladies who have honoured us with their presence.

In the course of the evening several of the ladies tuned their silver notes to the composition of Burns, Byron, &c. The company voted their thanks to Mr. Cargon for the handsome manner in which he had entertained them, and they broke up in good time and good order, with a pledge to renew the compact next year.

P. S. A meeting took place at the village of Westhoughton, near this place, on the same evening, and for the same purpose.

W. S.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

MY DEAR SIR,

I do most sincerely "hope with you that the time will come when secrecy will be no longer necessary." When that happy period arrives, I will take the first opportunity of shaking THE HONESTEST MAN IN ENGLAND by the hand, and, at the same time, acknowledge my sense of the important services he has rendered to his country, by his heroic devotion, in the *cause of free discussion*. I have, for many years, been in a state of *mental slavery*, even in this boasted *Land of Freedom*; for, where is the man whose person or property would be safe, if he were openly to denounce the odious superstition of the age we live in? You are a living witness of the *abject slavery* to which *Englishmen* are subject. But as I look up to you, and to you only for emancipation, I consider it right, whilst you are fighting my battle, and that of my countrymen, to contribute towards making your imprisonment *tolerable*, by the aid of such pecuniary means as my limited finance will permit. You will oblige me, therefore, by accepting the enclosed Twenty Pound note, being my fifth subscription. Nothing ever gave me more pleasure than your magnanimous declaration (after the robbery you had sustained) "that you would not pay your INIQUITOUS FINES." This has quite staggered the fanatics. They did not expect to find such a resolute Champion of "The Age of Reason," and I verily believe that my Lord Chief Justice, Judge Bailey, Mr. Wilberforce, and the Lords SPIRITUAL, would willingly consent to your having the £500,000 about to be voted for building new Churches, provided you would *recant your opinions*, and thereby add a little longer life to the REIGNING IDOLATRY. Had it not been for the mistaken zeal of Mr. Wilberforce, and his persecuting colleagues of the Vice Society, it is possible, the present *system of fraud and delusion*, might have lasted some *fifty years* longer; but, thanks to their exertions, they have called forth into action a GENIUS who will totally destroy the baseless fabric in less than *five years*.

It may be a source of consolation to you to know, that a great change has taken place in men's minds since you were thrown into prison. Public opinion is at work, and *works well*, too, in your favour. A peculiar train of circumstances has given me an opportunity to scan all ranks of society, from the very highest to the very lowest, and notwithstanding the *cant, dissimulation and hypocrisy*, which infect this nation, yet, it is easy to discern that *nineteen twentieths* of the thinking part of the community are UNBELIEVERS. The human mind is making a grand struggle for freedom. Things cannot long remain as they are. The impor-

tance of your character rises in public estimation in proportion to the wrongs you endure.

You have only to go on in the same steady course you have hitherto pursued, and your victory will be complete. And a glorious victory it will be indeed! no less, than *the total annihilation of the whole MACHINERY OF DELUSION*; consisting of the following articles of the Christian faith:—*an immaterial God, the Son of God, the Mother of God, the Virgin Mother, the Holy Ghost, the Trinity in Unity, Providence, Heaven, Hell, Cherubim, Seraphim, Archangels, Angels, Devils, Ghosts, Spirits, Souls, the immortality of the Soul, the fall of Man, the Saviour of the World, Redemption, Resurrection, Mystery, Prophecy, Miracles, Possessions, Revelations, Inspirations, supernatural Dreams, Visions, and "Grace internal and external; gratuitous, sanctifying, actual, habitual Grace; effectual Grace, (which is sometimes ineffectual) sufficient Grace, (often insufficient) and lastly, versatile and congruous Grace!!!"*

This will be your glorious work, Carlile! and to shew the *force of truth*, it will only be necessary to state the *fearful odds* with which you have had to contend. I have no means of ascertaining the exact number, but I think the *Priesthood of the United Kingdom*, (including the Clergy of the Church of England, the Kirk of Scotland, the Dissenting Ministers of all denominations, and the Roman Catholic Priests) may be taken at 30000 men, who are certainly the best educated and consequently the most learned men in the Kingdom. These, again, are supported by a revenue of *NATIONAL PROPERTY* of from *five to ten millions* a year—divided into annuities of from *thirty to thirty thousand pounds* per annum, of which a few *fifties* and *hundreds* fall to the lot of the children of the "*swinish multitude*," the remainder, to the children of our *hereditary legislators*, and to those of the *higher classes of society*; forming altogether an overwhelming system of influence which destroys every spark of independence in the House of Commons, as far as concerns your case. To this must be added the *voluntary subscriptions* raised by those who differ from the established church. Yet this formidable phalanx, dare not allow a *clear stage and fair play* to one poor bookseller!!! Nothing will glut their revenge but *ILLEGAL, UNJUST, and enormous fines*, awarded by corrupt judges in order to insure your imprisonment for life!!!

Oh! my deluded countrymen! think on *this contrast*, and if you *dare to think for yourselves*, then say, whether it be possible for the ingenuity of man to devise a stronger argument against Christianity? For my part, I conceive, that I owe it to the cause of truth to declare, that I have been reading and reflecting on the subject for more than thirty years, and that I do not feel more convinced of my own existence than I do, that Christianity is a *gross imposture*. And moreover, that it is not possible for any

man to prove the truth of *any one of the above articles*. I, therefore, hailed the day that brought forth the *brave Carlile*, feeling confident that all the powers on earth, could not withstand the principles he was about to advocate. In the above enumeration of combatants, opposed to your single arm, I forgot to mention the *Bible Societies*; but as they may be considered as *avant-couriers* of more useful knowledge, they may very properly be classed rather as *allies* than *enemies*. They have my warmest support; at the same time, I think the sphere of their utility would be wonderfully enhanced, if they would consent to bind up the "Age of Reason," and the "Rights of Man," with every Bible they distribute. And let me ask Mr. Wilberforce (who is the only tangible character that I know of in the persecuting society) what danger would there be in it? What chance would Thomas Paine's books stand with a book written *by God himself*? For if *inspiration* means any thing, it means *that*. Nothing would more satisfactorily prove the divine origin of the Bible than its being able to withstand such an ordeal. Do pray, Mr. Wilberforce, give us *a good reason* why this ought not to be done? You are, I see, again appealing to the public for fresh funds to carry on your persecuting system, and most disingenuously endeavour to deceive the public by connecting *blasphemous books* (alias books on moral and philosophical subjects) with *obscene books*, when *you know* that Mr. Carlile has constantly disclaimed all participation in such disgraceful traffic. But this shallow artifice will not ultimately answer your purpose, and since you dare not enter the lists of argumentation with Mr. Carlile, it is beneath your character to turn calumniator.

Before I close this letter, there is another subject I wish to mention. Mr. Plunkett, one of the most enlightened men which this or any other country ever produced, is just reported to have said in the House of Commons, "that no system of education could be safely conducted, of which religion was not the basis. He thought it impracticable and chimerical to rest any system of education on morality only; the attempt, in his mind, was not only useless but pernicious." Now, it is hardly possible to conceive, *in these days*, that a mind constituted as this Gentleman's is, can believe in the *Christian Religion*, and *that* is the religion I presume he means (for Christians believe that *all other religions* are false). Unfortunately, the Rt. Honourable Gentleman is an *interested party*, being Attorney General to the Lord Lieutenant, and therefore it throws great doubt on his sincerity. It is, however, lamentable to see such men forced, as it were, to become the panders of fraud and delusion. I hope, therefore, my dear Sir, that you will never cease to combat a doctrine so pernicious in every point of view. RELIGION HAS NO BASIS. MORAL PHILOSOPHY HAS A BASIS in the RATIONAL FACULTIES OF MAN, and stands opposed to *fanaticism* and *religion*, which are synonymous terms. Let those who ought to take the lead in society, only once have

the courage to become *honest men*, and then all obstacles to the happiness and welfare of the human race would vanish.

I must now conclude, and with every good wish for your health and future prosperity, I remain,

Your sincere Friend,
"An Enemy to Persecution."

JOVE AND THE SINNERS.

S. O Jove! we wretched mortals humble ourselves before thee. We beseech thee, O Jove! to pity and befriend us.

J. I do not like your mean flatteries and fawning, You must choose some other phrases, or some other deity.

S. O Jove! we prostrate ourselves before thee. We acknowledge thee to be the Lord! and beg leave to praise thee.

J. But I neither need nor desire your praises. Is this your professed humility—to suppose I can be delighted with *your* praises?—What palpable affectation, pride, and self-flattery, is this?

S. We magnify thee, O Jove!

J. *Magnify* me! How can you magnify me, you impudent fools? And what liars, too, when, in fact, all your endeavours do but humanize and lessen me.

S. To show forth our gratitude and thy glory, we praise thee, O Jove!

J. I thought so! I thought it was to blazen forth some of your own rare and exemplary virtues, under the pretence of showing forth my glory. Know, silly mortals, that what I give, I give freely. You would persuade me, that being afraid of incurring a debt with me, you would recompence me in glory. What conceit! This vain commodity of glory, must surely be of great value amongst weak mortals, when they seek to bribe with it even the immortal Gods! Have you then so mean an opinion of deity, as to think I cannot perform a generous act without a return of glory? Or would you rob me of the greatest glory, which is to do good, without desiring any return—even of praise? Low-minded, perverting mortals—utterly ignorant, as you are, of the higher degrees of goodness—you worship your own vices and weaknesses, under the self-delusive pretext of worshipping Jupiter; and think to persuade him, who is not susceptible of persuasion, that your gross self-flattery is real humility. Away with such piety.—

GAOL MATTERS.

I HAVE at length beaten my *brutal Christian Keepers* into something like civility—something like good behaviour. The new Sheriff, Mr. George Garland, of Stone, in this county, has been made the instrument of finally accomplishing it; though I have for some time understood, by hints and nods, that the Visiting Magistrates were waiting his appointment to office to make him the authority for the change.

"*Naugh! we cannot alter it*" was the speech of Dr. England, the Archdeacon of Dorset, when I complained, four years ago, of being locked up twenty-three and a half out of every twenty-four hours. He has been now driven from one thing to another, until I have free access to the best walk that the Gaol affords during day light. Perseverance will accomplish any thing, if the cause be good, and I will never forsake Dr. England, so long as I live and he teaches *divinity*! His name shall ever be to me a memento of duty, of what has been done, and of what can and may be done by perseverance. In every thing that I may hereafter do or say to the personal opposition of the Priests, my text, my stimulus, shall be—*Dr. England!*

The following letters will explain themselves, as to a couple of tricks practised by the Gaoler.

TO C. B. WOLLASTON ESQ., VISITING MAGIS-
TRATE FOR DORCHESTER GAOL.

SIR,

Dorchester Gaol, Feb. 2, 1824.

MR. ANDREWS, the Gaoler, seems determined to drive me with complaints to the Visiting Magistrates, which I desire to avoid. It has been a general complaint on my part, that no kind of written or printed rules have been presented to me for my observation, from my coming to the Gaol, down to this day, and with the exception of rules as to hours of walking, and the one made about my visitors in December 1822, I have not known whether or not I was subject to any rules, and have constantly gone upon suppositions, until I found myself upon forbidden ground. Whether the Gaoler has any written rules to observe towards me, I know not, or what representations have been made, or what understandings exist between him and the Visiting Magistrates, I know not, as respects my treatment and procedure. Upon

all these matters, if any such do exist, or have existed, I am quite ignorant; and I am led to surmise, that orders and counter orders, representations and misrepresentations, have been made, by the indecisive and unintelligible conduct of the Gaoler towards me. This by way of preface.

The object of this letter is this: not being a wine-bibber, nor an ale tippler, I have not troubled the officers of the Gaol to supply me with any thing of the kind regularly; at least, not on my own account, but exceptions have arisen, in which I have asked for both ale and wine, and always found them brought in any quantity desired, without hesitation, and apparently, as a matter of course. Bottles of wine have been sent to me by friends at a distance, known to be such by the turnkey who has brought them, and no objection was heard by me until saturday last, when a Mr. Dickson of Exeter, who has of late frequently visited me, having other business periodically in Dorchester and Weymouth, and having frequently requested permission to bring in a bottle of wine with him, did so, but was told by Mr. Andrews, that it could not be allowed to me. Though caring nothing about the wine for my own use, I was surprised at the denial, as a novelty and change; and yesterday I asked the turnkey to bring me a bottle of port wine from the town, as has been often the case before. Here again I met a refusal, and was told that I must get an order from the Magistrate. This was communicated to me as the Gaoler's order.

I do not say that I wish to drink wine regularly, though I have been advised by a medical friend to drink a pint per day as the best remedy for that languor which my close and lengthened confinement must, and does occasion; still I do desire to know, whether I am or am not to be allowed to have it if I wish to order it; and I will thank you, as a Visiting Magistrate, or the Visiting Magistrates as a body, to make some decisive order upon the subject.

I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,
 RICHARD CARLILE.

The above letter brought an order that I was to have as much wine as I liked, guarding only against irregularity or bad example in the Gaol. The Gaoler was directed to come and read a written order to that effect, which he did in a stammering manner, and evidently with reluctance; I told him, that, as it was not now denied, I did not want any thing of the kind.

TO C. B. WOLLASTON ESQ., VISITING MAGIS-
TRATE FOR DORCHESTER GAOL.

SIR,

Dorchester Gaol, Feb. 21, 1824.

I HAVE again to complain of the offensive conduct of Mr. Andrews, the Gaoler, to one of my visitors. As far as frowns, insolent questions, more insolently addressed, and petty annoyances, by offensive and unnecessary searchings, can do it, he tries how far he can insult them all. But, this morning, he took a small memorandum book from Francis Roberts, who is now in my employ, and examined every item written on it. Now, certainly, such an act can make no part of his duty.

I have no secrets nor secret dealings with any person, and I acknowledge, of which I have given, and shall further give, public notice, that I have brought Francis Roberts from Lancashire into this neighbourhood, to extend my business, if possible, by getting him to take orders for, and deliver all sorts of books, but those of my own publication in particular.

I shall be obliged to you, if you will make Mr. Andrews sensible, that he has gone beyond the line of his duty on this occasion,

And am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

RICHARD CARLILE.

I heard nothing in answer to this letter; but I soon found a marked change in the manners of the brute towards the visitors. He had been in the habit of making them bring notes to be sent up to me, to know if I wished to see them, and then he required me to write to him on paper, that I did wish to see them. In some instances, where the persons have not been aware of the necessity of this note, he has made them go back into the town of Dorchester to write or get one written! But the week following this complaint, all the visitors were ushered up to my surprise without notes. Since there has been an order to admit all visitors, this fellow has done every thing in his power to insult and deter them from coming; and the look of him is enough to make a woman miscarry, if she does not happen to know him previously. When Humphrey Boyle came to see me, in November last, the Gaoler addressed him, as I suppose he does his victims, when they are to be tortured by the lash. "You must strip!" was his savage command. The week after the above

letter was sent, Joseph Rhodes and William Holmes came to see me: when the Gaoler addressed the latter, with a piece of his forced and very rare politeness: "Do you know, Sir, that you must submit to be searched? We are obliged to do things in a very straight forward way here." This must have been the perfection of his politeness! An effort! I hardly know, whether I ought to believe Holmes: it is so contrary to every thing else that has happened!

On Wednesday morning, the seventeenth instant, the Chaplain introduced the new Sheriff, Mr. Garland. His manners were wholly different to those of any person connected with the Gaol, excepting the present Chaplain, who has yet come near me. Dignified without hauteur, affable without familiarity, and decidedly respectable—such a man as commands respect from all. He desired me to make a written statement of my complaints; assured me that he would do all he could do: but cautioned me against anticipating too much. In the course of the day, I wrote him the following statement; and at the same time, sent a letter to the Judge.

TO GEORGE GARLAND ESQ., HIGH SHERIFF
FOR THE COUNTY OF DORSET.

SIR, Dorchester Gaol, March 17, 1824.
AGREEABLY to your recommendation, I proceed to write a statement of my complaint as to treatment in this Gaol.

I have this day filled a period of four years and four months imprisonment in this Gaol, I may say, for the exception is scarcely worth mention, *in this chamber*.

On coming to the Gaol, November 18, 1819, I was put and locked into this chamber. On the 20th, it was communicated to me, that I might be allowed to walk out *half an hour each day or one hour each alternate day, or so much of that time as the Gaoler could attend or provide a person to attend*. I complained of such treatment, first, to the Gaoler, then to the Visiting Magistrates; but without any effect. I found that not only was the time insufficient, as a matter of air and exercise, and the order evidently illegal and an exception to the general rule of managing this and every other Gaol in this country; but the mode of executing it, of being led out at the appointment of another, dogged about and ordered in, was such as no person with the feelings of a man could bear. It was, in fact, nothing short of a gross daily insult; and such as I could not, and hope I never shall be able to brook. In March, 1820, I complained to Lord Sidmouth—the consequence of which was that the Visiting

Magistrates offered to make the time one hour a day, or two hours a day to walk in the ward of solitude. This I refused to comply with, as I felt, and now feel, that I am legally intitled to free access to the open air in the day time, *not having been sentenced to solitary confinement*; and, by some rules of the Gaol, which for the first time, came into my hands last summer, sanctioned in the year 1810, by the Judges of that summer assize (Bailey and Wood), I find, that my treatment tallies precisely with the treatment laid down for persons sentenced to solitary confinement. There are three degrees of solitary confinement specified, mine tallies with the second.

In those printed Rules, which, I have lately ascertained, have never been superseded, it is directed, that persons confined in the ward of which my room is or was a part, shall be allowed to walk in the yard fronting the Gaoler's House, or in that part of his garden contiguous to the front wings of the Gaol. Nothing is said about half an hour a day, nor an hour, nor any hours a day; nor can I believe, if such a proposition had been made to the Judges, that they would have sanctioned it, as it reduces the treatment to a similarity with those sentenced to solitary confinement.

Nothing that passed with regard to the treatment of Mrs. Carlile and my sister, nor with regard to the illegal exclusion for three years of all visitors who came to see me, which has been abated, can now concern you, as High Sheriff for the present year, it will be sufficient that I say, for my present case, that the time of access to the open air has been extended from half an hour to an hour, from one to two hours, from two to three hours, at which it now stands; but, with which, as a matter unnecessary, illegal and insulting, I decline to comply. The change, or extension of time, argues both the illegality and inhumanity of each former rule; and though, it is probable, that I should not consume more than three hours in a day, in walking about; still, as I perform a deal of labour in reading and writing, and walk more as a matter of ease, after long sittings, than for any thing else, I want to be so situated as to be able to select my own half hours or hours for walking throughout the day, as every other prisoner can do, and not to be ordered out and in at the pleasure of any body.

My present treatment is this—a man comes and unlocks my door at nine o'clock in the morning, parades as a centinel before it, if I walked out at the appointed place, he would follow me, and, at twelve, he locks the door again.

I have submitted a written statement of my treatment to Mr. Garland, the High Sheriff, and pray your Lordship's interference to remedy the unwarrantable, and unnecessary restrictions imposed upon me.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's obedient Servant,
RICHARD CARLILE.

On the Saturday, the twentieth instant, he came again, and after saying the Judge had desired him to acknowledge the receipt of the letter, and that he (the Judge) had conversed with him (the Sheriff) upon the subject: he began to communicate his intentions: first, that he should order every thing, of which I had been deprived in November, to be restored: second, that he had been looking round the Gaol and was anxious to accommodate me with a place to walk upon; but could not find any better than I had been offered: and as to the situation of my room with respect to that place, it prevented an open passage. He expressed the same fears, as the Magistrates, of any opportunity of my being able to communicate my opinions to any prisoner (though I told him that I had seen every opportunity of so doing, if I had thought it worth the effort); but, eventually it was agreed, that I should ring the bell and call a person to open the way to the garden whenever I choose, during day light. On leaving me, he said: but after all, I hope you will soon be able to pay your fines and go out. I assured him, that if I had bags of money, I would rather perish in the Gaol than pay a sixpence of them, after I had been so robbed. Oh! dear! says he, you are the last man that should talk about perishing! Whether he meant, that it was dangerous to perish without being a Christian, or what, I do not know. But, if I see him no more, I shall say, that he was the only respectable Magistrate that ever visited me in Dorchester Gaol. The only man, as a Magistrate, who has shewn me a spark of honour, or a beam of humanity. Much of this may be attributable to circumstances; but such is the apparent and the real fact.

Now I have beaten these reptiles of Visiting Magistrates, this Dr. England & Co. I do not care how soon I leave Dorchester Gaol. I certainly should have left it reluctantly if I had not so beaten them. Their practice has been, and the printed rules of the Gaol prescribe, that an obstinate prisoner, it matters not what be his object, shall be *reduced by cruelty* (they call it restrictive punishment, &c.). They have

been trying this with me for four years, and now, they may learn *the superiority of moral power and perseverance, in a right cause, over their brute physical power and more brutal enactments.* They will hear more of it yet, by way of refreshing their memories. Never, Dr. England, will I forsake you, so long as I live and you preach *divinity!*

I have *a rod in pickle* for Henry Charles Sturt, the last Sheriff, which, when pickled well, I shall lay on in a manner to make him as sore as ever was a flogged animal. To Mr. Garland I purpose to address some very *polite and becoming* letters, at his expressed fears of my having any means to communicate with any other prisoner. I shall tell him what the prisoners have gained by such communications as those to which they have been accustomed during my confinement in the Gaol.

Many of my friends are beginning to shew me a very odd kind of friendship. I suppose, that I must allow them good motives. Lately, from several parts of the country, they have wished me *a more protracted imprisonment!* Their reasons are something like the following:—"We find your lengthened imprisonment, the robbery on your property, and treatment in the Gaol, the most effective weapon, and the most powerful argument that we can use against the Christians. When plainly and fairly stated to them; they are all confounded; scarcely one of them can be found to defend it; and we think, that your continued imprisonment is doing more work, more effectual work, than your pen can do in or out of a Gaol. Such are the sentiments of some of my friends, and I am beginning to debate, whether I had not better petition for a protracted imprisonment, rather than for release; for, I am afraid, that, if I am let out, I shall never be prosecuted again, so as to be able to work a second effort of the kind that I have once made.

RICHARD CARLILE.